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SSA/DDS #70-1553

23 JUL 1970

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Personnel

SUBJECT : Payment for Retirement Travel Within Metropolitan Area

REFERENCE : Memo to SSA-DDS fr OGC dtd 5 Jun 70, same subject

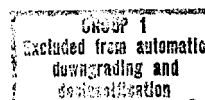
1. Of the many issues that have come before the Travel Policy Committee, none has absorbed more of its attention than the question whether or not retirement travel should be authorized a CIARDS retiree within the metropolitan area of his post of assignment. Its decision to advocate such a policy was the outcome of deliberations occurring over a period of many weeks and was reached only after a full exploration of the policy, legal, and practical considerations involved.

2. As you are aware, two cases have already arisen in which the determination of an employee's eligibility to receive travel within the Washington Metropolitan Area was requested. Conscious of the fact that these cases were forerunners of future requests that would inevitably arise, our Office early sought legal clarification from the Office of General Counsel and policy guidance from the Travel Policy Committee concerning what the Agency's position should be on this subject.

3. Although initial concern mainly centered on the legal aspects, it has now been decided that the Agency has authority to authorize travel related to retirement within the same metropolitan area as a CIARDS retiree's post of assignment. In addition to the reasons given in Referent Memorandum (inter alia, the application to retirement travel of the criteria cited in BOB Circular A-56 for PCS transfers), it should be recalled domestic travel of CIARDS retirees has its origin in the administrative adoption of the Secretary of State's statutory authority to pay travel and transportation expenses of a retiring Foreign Service Officer to the "place where he will reside." (A similar provision appears in P.L. 110.) Although the Department of State has not utilized its statutory authority to pay the travel of retirees within a metropolitan area, it should also be recalled the Agency deviated somewhat from State's regulatory provisions in establishing the right of CIARDS retirement travel to any point in the United States, its possessions, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. (State limits its regulation to a retiree's designated residence.) Having determined the Agency's legal capacity to provide for CIARDS retirement travel within metropolitan areas, the Travel Policy Committee confined its subsequent consideration to the desirability of such proposal and the practical problems involved, pro and con.

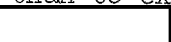
4. Conceptually, the Committee believed the current provision in [redacted] which permits the payment of travel expenses "to the place where the employee will reside..." should not be applied only to some

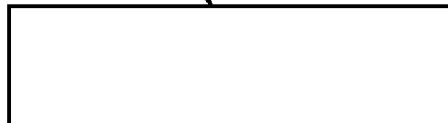
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arbitrarily established perimeter outside a metropolitan area. Such action would provide preferential treatment to retirees who opted to travel to a more distant point, and it would confine the entitlement to more expensive travel situations. The Committee was mindful that retirement travel by its very nature is a positive benefit granted to an employee at the close of his career, theoretically justified by a lifetime of service. It did not feel a distinction should be drawn among retirees, otherwise eligible, simply because of the distance involved in a retirement move.

5. One other factor figured prominently in the conclusions of the TPC, namely, the practical difficulty in drawing a dividing line within an urban area for the purpose of retirement travel. It was partly for this reason the TPC chose not to propose as a precedent the ten mile limit defined in BOB A-56 for domestic PCS transfers. While use of a recognized mileage limit would help to simplify determinations of travel eligibility in individual cases, the TPC recognized practical problems would arise if a mileage limit were used (e.g., Arlington but not Falls Church) or if the Agency took no position other than to exclude metropolitan areas without defining boundaries. For example,  might not cause a problem but Sterling Park, Virginia might. 25X1

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